

## CHAPTER XIII.

THE CITY OF CONCORD.—NEW GOVERNMENT IN OPERATION.—  
CITY AND COUNTY BUILDING.—PUBLIC LIBRARY.—THE PRO-  
HIBITORY LAW.—PROGRESS IN VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS.—  
ANTE-WAR POLITICS.

1853–1865.

In accordance with the vote of the town at its last meeting, measures were forthwith taken to organize the city government. The selectmen caused check-lists to be prepared for the seven wards,<sup>1</sup> and warrants to be posted for the elections prescribed in the charter, to be held therein on Saturday, the twenty-sixth day of March, 1853. While each ward was to contribute its vote for the choice of a mayor, it was, by itself, to choose a moderator, clerk, three selectmen, one alderman, two members of the common council, an assessor, and a member of the superintending school committee.

At the polls, on the appointed day, political party lines were drawn with considerable strictness. For the mayoralty Joseph Low was the Democratic candidate, Richard Bradley the Whig, and Asa Fowler the Freesoil. Of the one thousand five hundred nineteen votes cast, the first received seven hundred forty-nine; the second, six hundred forty-four; the third, one hundred twenty-six. At this trial, a majority was requisite to a choice, and of this Low failed by twenty-one votes. Of the seven aldermen and fourteen common councilmen elected, all but two of the former and four of the latter were of the Democratic party, the exceptions belonging to wards 1 and 3 of Fisherville and West Concord.

The members of the first city council of Concord, named in the order of their wards, were,—Aldermen: John Batchelder, John L. Tallant, Joseph Eastman, Robert Davis, Edson Hill, Matthew Harvey, Josiah Stevens. Common council: Jeremiah S. Durgin and Eben F. Elliot; Samuel B. Larkin and Heman Sanborn; George W. Brown and Moses Humphrey; Ezra Carter and George Minot; William H. H. Bailey and Cyrus Barton; Ebenezer G. Moore and Thomas Bailey; Moses Shute and Giles W. Ordway.

The organization of wards, under the charter, was completed, but that of the city government proper had to await another mayoralty election, the result of which a plurality would decide. On Tuesday,

<sup>1</sup> See Wards Defined, in note at close of chapter.

April 5th, came the second trial, with Joseph Low and Richard Bradley as the candidates; the former of whom received eight hundred twenty-seven of the fourteen hundred sixty-six votes cast—four scattering included—and the latter six hundred thirty-nine. So, by a majority of one hundred eighty-eight, General Joseph Low, who had been foremost in obtaining the charter from the legislature and in pressing its acceptance by the town, became the first mayor of Concord. On the afternoon of the next day, Wednesday, April 6th, occurred, in Representatives' hall, and, in presence of a large assemblage of people, the induction of the city officers-elect. The mayor-elect took seat in the speaker's chair, having, on the right and left, the aldermen, common councilmen, assessors, and school committee; and before him, at the clerk's desk, the last town board of selectmen. The mayor-elect signified to the chairman of the selectmen, John C. Pilsbury, that he was present to take the oath of office before entering upon its duties; whereupon, in compliance with the request of the chairman, the oath was administered by Judge Josiah Minot, a circuit justice of the court of common pleas. His Honor, Mayor Low, then administered the oath to the other officers-elect; and after a Scripture reading by the Reverend Charles W. Flanders, pastor of the Baptist church, and prayer by the Reverend Dr. Bouton, senior ordained clergyman of the city, he delivered his inaugural address to the members of the city government. In the course of this he said: "The change of government upon which we are about to enter involves duties and responsibilities that can be successfully met and performed only by the united and patient efforts of those to whom the administration of the affairs of the city has been confided. I may consider myself singularly fortunate that I am associated with so many gentlemen of tried worth and long experience in the municipal affairs of the town; and I doubt not that it will be the anxious care of every member of the government of the corporation to have the change bear as lightly upon every section and every individual as may be consistent with the highest good and truest interests of the city, and realized only by its convenient, economical, and efficient action. . . . I am not aware that any considerable change or unusual outlay will be required to accomplish all the objects for which the city charter was obtained; nor do I apprehend, gentlemen, under your administration, any augmentation of burthens or material increase of taxation consequent upon its adoption."

The exercises of induction having closed, the common council withdrew to another room, and the two branches of the city council began to act, each by itself. In the board of mayor and aldermen, remaining in Representatives' hall, two members were appointed upon

each of two joint committees—a standing one to report rules, and a special one to secure rooms for the use of the city government. In the common council, Thomas Bailey, the oldest member, presided until Cyrus Barton was, by ballot, elected president and took the chair. Councilman William H. H. Bailey was chosen clerk pro tempore, and the council having concurred in the appointment of the committees on rules and rooms by adding three members to each, met, for the first time, the other board in convention or city council, with the mayor presiding, and wherein Alderman Josiah Stevens was elected city clerk pro tempore. Both branches then adjourned for three days, or until April 9th, then to meet at the court house.

At this adjourned meeting, the board of mayor and aldermen met in the grand jury room; the common council in the court room. In the common council Amos Hadley was, by ballot, unanimously elected clerk, as he was annually to be for the next fifteen years. The first appointment to office made by the mayor and aldermen was that of Moses Gill as overseer of the poor farm. In convention, John F. Brown was elected city clerk, and William H. Bartlett city solicitor. The two boards concurred in the adoption of joint rules and the appointment of joint standing committees of the city council; while each board adopted its own standing rules and appointed its own standing committees. An adjournment of four days was then taken, or until Wednesday, April 13th.

At this third meeting, Jonathan E. Lang was chosen city treasurer; John C. Pilsbury, city marshal, collector of taxes, and constable, and James F. Sargent, city physician. A joint committee was appointed to prepare and report ordinances, of which Alderman Robert Davis was chairman; and two ordinances were at once introduced, being the first ever presented in the city council of Concord. The first of the two was for “establishing a system of accountability in the expenses of the city”; the second, “to establish a City Seal.” These, after reference to appropriate committees in both branches, were, upon due consideration, concurrently passed.

Thus, the city council, in its first three meetings held within the space of those seven April days, set the machine of municipal legislation in orderly and effective motion. Thenceforward, during the first year of experiment, the change from town to city government was so wisely handled as to bear fairly, never heavily, upon the people, and so as to be realized only by its convenient, economical, and efficient action.<sup>1</sup> The new conditions were met by twenty-eight ordinances, more or less elaborate, and by other judicious measures. The rate of taxation was not increased over that of the last year of

<sup>1</sup> Mayor Low's first Inaugural.

the town, nor was there reason to expect increase therein for the coming year. From a laborious examination of the fiscal concerns of the town at the close of its organization, a thorough understanding of the real state of affairs at the commencement of the new organization<sup>1</sup> was reached; and the establishment of a strict system of accountability helped to render possible present and future knowledge of the exact financial condition of the city. A regular police department was established, with its first city marshal, John C. Pilsbury, and his two assistants at the head; with its corps of policemen and two night-watch; and its police court, at which its first justice, Calvin Ainsworth, presided. The fire department, also, received early attention, and, somewhat remodeled, "was never in better condition," as Nathaniel B. Baker, its chief engineer, declared in his annual report. The schools, too, reported commendable progress. And without specializing further, it may safely be said that the substantial interests of Concord were never more satisfactory and full of hope,<sup>1</sup> than at the end of the first year of the city.

Though the administration of city affairs was hardly, if at all, in issue at the election of 1854, yet, as in the year before, three straight party tickets were generally supported for municipal officers, at the regular March meeting, with the result of no choice of mayor, and some change in the party complexion of the boards of aldermen and common council. Of the 1,631 votes cast for mayor—including 32 scattering—Joseph Low, Democrat, had 761; Ephraim Hutchins, Whig, 659; James Peverly, Freesoiler, 179. Plurality not electing on the first trial, there was no choice. But in the municipal contest, four Democratic and three opposition aldermen were chosen, and eight opposition and six Democratic common councilmen. At the second mayoralty election, held on the 5th of April, with but two candidates, Low was elected by a majority of forty-eight votes over Hutchins. Before this re-election, however, the aldermen and common councilmen-elect had, on Tuesday, the 21st of March, been duly inducted,—with official oath administered by Mayor Low,—and had entered upon their duties. So that on Saturday, the 8th of April, the boards met, as an organized city council, in Rumford hall, when and where took place the induction of the re-elected mayor.

At the retirement of Mayor Low after his two years' service, the Democratic party, in 1855, was so weakened by the "American" or "Know-Nothing" movement, that a Democratic candidate for municipal office in Concord stood no chance of being elected. Thus, at the March election of that year, Ezra Carter, the Democratic nominee for mayor, was defeated by Rufus Clement, his "American"

<sup>1</sup> Mayor Low's second Inaugural.

antagonist, by a majority of five hundred sixty-one on a total vote of one thousand eight hundred sixty-nine; and the boards of aldermen and common council were entirely "American." But the second mayor thus elected did not live to complete his term of official service. Dying on the 12th of January, 1856, he left vacant the position which he had acceptably filled for ten months, and was succeeded by John Abbott, chosen four days later by the city council. The remaining municipal elections, occurring within the period covered by this chapter, need not be treated in detail. Suffice it to say in this connection that their results were continuous successes won over Democratic opposition, with consequent unbroken American or Republican ascendancy in the city government, at the head of which stood in the mayoralty: John Abbott in 1856, 1857, and 1858; Moses T. Willard in 1859 and 1860; Moses Humphrey in 1861 and 1862; Benjamin F. Gale in 1863 and 1864; Moses Humphrey in 1865.

The School Fund was one of the topics of Mayor Low's second inaugural. The lands, from the sale of which this fund arose, comprised the "house and home" lots assigned, in 1726, to the "School," in the original division of the Plantation into one hundred three lots, and subsequent additions thereto made from territory at first undivided—just as in the case of the Parsonage Fund lands, as more fully set forth in a former chapter. By order of the town, the school lands were sold in 1826. The price received was one thousand six hundred ninety-one dollars. This sum, as the principal of a school fund, had accumulated, despite some loss on investment in stock of the Concord bank, so as to amount, at the close of the fiscal year, 1853, to eight thousand six hundred seventy-eight dollars. The principal of this fund, for each successive year, had been that of the preceding with the year's interest added, and had finally become wholly a loan to the town, on the certificate of the selectmen. Mayor Low, having described the fund as "arising from lands sold by the town, and pledged for educational purposes, but which was paid into the town treasury, and used to liquidate its corporate indebtedness," added the forcible suggestion: "As it is questionable whether the city can legally impose a tax for purposes of education other than as prescribed by the statute for the support of common schools, I submit for your consideration the expediency of canceling this item upon the books of the treasury, making an apparent increase of indebtedness, and having in itself no substantial character, or binding force upon the taxpayers of the city." The suggestion was adopted, and the school fund ceased, from 1854, to cumber the city's financial records.

The first Funded or Bonded Debt in Concord was created on the

second day of December, 1854, by an ordinance authorizing a loan of forty-six thousand dollars. This measure had been reported by a special committee consisting of Samuel Coffin and Joseph P. Stickney. Of the total loan thirty-one thousand dollars were appropriated for the payment of debts heretofore contracted by the town and city; and fifteen thousand dollars for defraying the expense of the erection, finishing, and furnishing of the city's portion of the building in process of construction jointly by said city and the county of Merrimack, and for the draining and grading of the land about the same. Provision was made for issuing certificates of stock of uniform date, with coupons or interest warrants annexed. Certificates for one thousand dollars each, and numbered from one to twenty-three, were to cover one half of the total sum; while the other half was to be covered by certificates for five hundred dollars each, and numbered from one to forty-six. These were made payable—one thousand dollars annually for ten years, and three thousand dollars annually for the succeeding twelve years—with six per cent. interest upon presentation of coupons to the city treasurer. Thus the city had twenty-three years in which to pay the whole debt in easy instalments. This measure introduced into the management of the city finances a practice to which future advantageous resort was often to be had. It was passed by both branches of the city council on a full vote—by the common council, unanimously; by the other board, with but one negative.

Indeed, early recourse was had to the convenient policy thus initiated, when in August, 1855, the funded debt was increased by twelve thousand dollars, distributed as follows: ten thousand for finishing the city hall and grading the lands about the same; five hundred for purchasing a strip of land adjoining the city land to improve the shape of the latter; and fifteen hundred for fitting up a room suitable for a city library, and the purchase of books, maps, and periodicals for the same. One fourth part of the stock certificates of this loan were made payable on the first day of January, 1878, and one fourth part yearly thereafter, until the whole should be paid; and the certificates were not to be sold for less than their par value.

The city and county building for which provision was made in these ordinances has been mentioned in an earlier chapter, but fuller treatment of the topic properly enough belongs here. The undertaking had been projected under the town organization, when in March, 1852, Josiah Minot, Richard Bradley, Joseph B. Walker, John Abbot, and Nathaniel B. Baker were appointed a committee with authority to make, in behalf of the town, such arrangements with the county as they might deem proper "for the erection of a

new building on or adjoining the site of the town house, with a town hall, court room, and other offices in the same, and to dispose of the old town house, and appropriate the proceeds thereof to the new building." At the last Concord town-meeting in March, 1853, the powers before given the committee were renewed and confirmed with additional authority "to purchase all the premises enclosed by Main street on the east; Court street on the north; Summer street on the west; and the south line of the Dearborn lot extended in a straight line westerly to Summer street on the south; or such parts thereof" as might be thought proper. The heaviest land purchase was the Dearborn lot, for which six thousand three hundred thirty dollars were paid. This sum, as Governor Nathaniel B. Baker remarked at the laying of the corner-stone of the new building, in 1855, was about the amount—at six per cent. compound interest—of the ten dollars paid for the same land a hundred years before by Richard Herbert, who was often rallied by his neighbors for paying such a price for "a sand-heap."<sup>1</sup>

By ordinance in August, 1854, the mayor was joined to the committee, the powers conferred by the votes of the town were continued, and full authority was given to proceed, in behalf of the city,



City Hall and County Court House.

with the duties assigned. Accordingly, within nine months, preparations were made for carrying out the joint enterprise of the city and county, and the corner-stone of the contemplated structure was laid on Friday, the 25th of May, 1855. At two o'clock in the afternoon a procession was formed at the Phenix building, and moved up Main street to the scene of ceremony. In this walked the members and officers of the city government, several clergymen of the city, and other citizens, under escort of members of the Masonic fraternity accompanied by the Concord brass band. Having arrived

upon the ground, those who came in procession occupied the floor of the south wing, temporarily laid for the occasion. After music by the band, prayer was offered by the Reverend Daniel Lancaster. A brief abstract of events and dates in local history was read by the Rev. Dr. Nathaniel Bouton, as also a list of documents to be depos-

<sup>1</sup> Bouton's Concord, 666.

ited beneath the corner-stone. These having been deposited in their proper place at the southeast corner of the building to be reared, the proper Masonic ceremonies, under the direction of the Reverend Samuel Kelly as acting grand master, were performed, the stone was laid, the corn, wine, and oil were poured upon it, and the benediction of Heaven implored upon the new structure. Governor Baker then made an address; and Mayor Clement followed with brief remarks that closed the exercises of an interesting occasion. The work of erection thus solemnized virtually reached completion towards the end of 1856. Upon a pleasant and historic site stood the edifice waited for with high expectations. Though of architectural design not faultless, it was a substantial, and by no means ugly, structure. Its well-built, two-storied walls of brick, securely underpinned in granite, enclosed an interior, finished in the center upon the lower floor, into a spacious city hall; upon the upper, into a corresponding county court room; and in its northern and southern wings, respectively, into apartments for county and city uses.<sup>1</sup>

The first public occupancy of the new city hall occurred on the evening of January 21, 1857, the occasion being a concert given by Benjamin B. Davis and John H. Morey, which, with the novelty of its place of holding, drew a large attendance. Such veteran and devoted friends of Concord's welfare and honor as Joseph Low, Richard Bradley, and William Kent were present to intersperse music with speech congratulatory upon the beautiful place of convening. Ten days later, in the afternoon of the last Saturday of January, the boards of city council, that for four years had been migratory,—meeting in county court and jury rooms, in the city clerk's office and the police court room, and in Phenix and Rumford blocks,—convened in permanent quarters suitably prepared for them in the south wing of the new building, and later still, or on the 17th of March, the members-elect of the fifth city government were the first to be formally inducted in the city hall, thereafter to be the fixed place for similar official ceremonies.

The subject of establishing and maintaining a Public Library was forcibly urged upon the consideration of the city council by Mayor Low, in his second inaugural address, on the 8th of April, 1854. This important subject came as a legacy from the town to the city. When, in 1849, the general state law was passed, authorizing towns and cities to establish public libraries, Concord had, in March, 1850, appointed a committee of five, consisting of Sylvester Dana, Asa Fowler, Jacob A. Potter, Moses Shute, and Abel Baker, to report, at the next town-meeting, what action should be taken in relation to

<sup>1</sup> See "County Building," and the Old Town and Court House, in note at close of chapter.



the establishment and perpetual maintenance of a public library, and what sum of money the town should raise and appropriate for that purpose. But, at the next town-meeting, in March, 1851, the warrant contained no article pertaining to the matter, and no report was made. In March, 1852, however, the committee made an able report, setting forth the advantages of such an institution, and accompanied by resolutions declaring the expediency of its immediate establishment. The resolutions, accordingly, provided for raising and appropriating one thousand dollars to be expended by a committee in purchasing books, periodicals, et cetera, for the commencement of the library; in furnishing suitable quarters, and in making other necessary incidental outlays during the ensuing year. The committee, just mentioned, was to consist of three disinterested and competent citizens, to be appointed annually by the selectmen, in the month of March, and denominated the Committee on the Public Library. This was to have charge of the institution, and to make rules and regulations for the control and the management of its affairs.

The town voted to accept the report, and to adopt the accompanying resolutions, thus sanctioning the immediate establishment of the library. But no immediate action followed, as prescribed in the vote of the town, and within a year the town had become the city. It was at the opening of the second year of the latter that Mayor Low called attention, as has been seen, to the undertaking that had lain in practical abeyance for two years, and was so to lie one year longer. At the beginning of the city's third year, Mayor Clement, in his inaugural address in March, 1855, earnestly renewed the recommendation of his predecessor, and, a few days later, ex-Mayor Low transmitted to the city council a communication enclosing a letter from John L. Emmons, of Boston, pledging from himself and John C. Abbott, both natives of Concord, one thousand dollars to aid in establishing a public library. The ex-mayor recommended early and favorable consideration of the offer. The communications and the general subject therewith connected were referred by the city council to a joint committee consisting of William Prescott, Nathan Farley, and Rufus Merrill. This committee, on the 28th of July, submitted a report, presenting strong considerations in favor of immediately establishing the library. This report was accompanied by a bill entitled "An ordinance for the establishment and perpetual maintenance of a public library in this city." The views of the committee were favorably received, and the ordinance reported by it was passed at the next regular session of the city council, held August 25, 1855. At the same session, and under the ordinance just enacted, the first trustees of the public library were elected, seven in number, or one

from each ward of the city. Named in the order of wards from one to seven, these were Abial Rolfe, Cyrus Robinson, Simeon Abbott, William Prescott, Henry A. Bellows, Lyman D. Stevens, and Josiah Stevens.

The ordinance appropriated fifteen hundred dollars for the purpose of establishing, commencing, and accommodating a public library. This sum was provided for in another ordinance, passed at the same session, to raise funds for completing the city hall, and for other purposes, being the second ordinance for funding the city indebtedness, as already narrated. Of the appropriation, the sum of three hundred dollars was allowed to be expended by the trustees "in procuring furniture, fixtures, and other articles" necessary for the accommodation of the library, for the ensuing municipal year; while the remaining twelve hundred dollars were to be laid out in the purchase of books, maps, charts, and other publications. The duties of the trustees were prescribed, with the provision that they were to receive no compensation for their services.

The board of trustees was organized by the choice of a president, secretary, and treasurer. A code of by-laws for the regulation of the institution in its charge was adopted, and committees were elected for purchasing, numbering, and arranging books, and for other purposes, all with a view to carrying the enterprise into full effect as soon as possible. But as the room assigned to the library in the still unfinished city hall building was not ready for occupancy, and it was not deemed expedient to procure and fit up another for a few months only, little or no progress could be made toward putting the library in operation. Indeed, at the end of the municipal year, 1855, the trustees reported that none of the money appropriated had been expended, though it had been drawn from the city treasury, and deposited in the Merrimack County bank, so as to be at hand for its designated uses.

The second board of trustees was elected April 5, 1856, and consisted of David A. Brown, Thomas D. Potter, Simeon Abbott, Amos Hadley, William H. Bartlett, Artemas B. Muzzey, and Jeremiah S. Noyes. It organized a week later by choosing Thomas D. Potter, president; Artemas B. Muzzey, secretary; Jeremiah S. Noyes, treasurer, the last, upon early resignation, being replaced by Ebenezer S. Towle, cashier of the Merrimack County bank.

To this board fell the lot of making the library a practical fact by setting it in operation. In the autumn of 1856, Secretary Muzzey, assisted by Amos Hadley, proceeded, by appointment of the board, to the selection and purchase of books. One thousand of the fifteen hundred dollars appropriated in the ordinance of 1855, was allowed

by the board to be expended in the purchase. By early winter, the library room on the second floor in the south end of city hall building was ready for use; and the purchased books, received and properly prepared for distribution, began to find their places upon the shelves. On the 3d of January, 1857, Andrew Capen, a former bookseller and publisher, was chosen librarian at a yearly salary of fifty dollars.

With ten hundred fifty dollars,—for the board allowed the original one thousand to be increased half a hundred,—about fourteen hundred volumes, systematically selected from the various departments of literature, were obtained—all intended for general circulation and reading. Nearly six hundred volumes had been early donated, but were mostly unadapted to circulation.

An increasing public interest in the enterprise was manifested. The newspaper press had a good word for it. Thus, the *Statesman*, in January, had this to say: “We understand that a portion of the books have already been purchased. From the known taste and learning of the gentlemen to whom the selection has been confided, we cannot but anticipate the most favorable results.”

In remarks at the opening of the city hall, General Low suggested that, under the guidance and control of the ladies of Concord, of all denominations, a grand levee be held, the proceeds to be appropriated to the enlargement of the public library. The suggestion was heeded. The library levee came off on Tuesday evening, February 24, 1857, and this is the *Statesman's* enthusiastic description of it: “The Court-House and City-Hall building was all ablaze. A low and aloft, it was effulgent with burning gas. Notwithstanding the badness of the traveling, the attendance was very large. The main tables were handsomely laid, and abundantly supplied with the usual viands prepared for such occasions; and from side-tables were dispensed that class of luxuries for which consideration is paid. The ladies of all religious societies were engaged in the undertaking, and entered with zest into proceedings preparatory to opening the doors of an edifice, the common property of all, for this first and only social gathering,—in one body, in beautiful and spacious apartments,—of people of all sects, and from all portions of Concord. Colonel Josiah Stevens had charge of arrangements within the hall. The Concord Brass Band, which has attained a high degree of skill, and become an institution without which the city would be an imperfect municipal organization, was in attendance. The proceeds, after defraying all expenses, were \$380: the money to be immediately placed in the hands of those gentlemen who made the present purchases for the city library; and such books as are bought with these proceeds are to be prepared for circulation with all practical despatch.”

One day in March, 1857, not long after this brilliant and helpful levee, and before its proceeds could be realized in books, the city library was opened to the public use, and its fourteen hundred volumes began to migrate from their shelves into the hands of eager readers. Yearly cards were issued to patrons, or subscribers, upon the payment of twenty-five cents. The purpose of this unburden-some requirement was that the annual amount of these small subscription fees might, as it did, afford relief—always acceptable, sometimes almost indispensable—to the finances of the institution.

The third board of trustees was elected a few days after the opening of the library. At its organization, Amos Hadley became president; holding the position for fifteen of his seventeen years of service as trustee. Before the end of the fiscal year, 1857-'58, more than three hundred volumes, purchased with the proceeds of the ladies' levee, had increased the number of books intended for circulation to nearly seventeen hundred fifty. In their annual report, the trustees said: "During the past year the public library has been opened to the use of our citizens. We are happy to say that its advantages have been very largely enjoyed. The full attendance at the library-room during the hours of delivery, and the avidity of the demand for books have attested that a public library is an institution imperatively demanded by the intellectual wants of our people." The first year's patronage, so gratifying to the trustees, was to continue with a steady increase, year by year. The small yearly charge to patrons was largely relied upon to pay the moderate salary of the first two successive librarians, Andrew Capen and Frederick S. Crawford, together with sundry incidental expenses, such as re-covering and re-binding books. But for supplying the constantly increasing demand for reading matter, consequent upon increasing patronage, the library depended mainly upon appropriations made by the city council. The aid offered at the outset to the library enterprise by non-resident natives of Concord was not realized, probably because of some change in the circumstances of those who offered it. The consequent deficiency was, however, partially remedied from the proceeds of two levees projected and carried out by the public-spirited ladies of the city: the first being held, as already described, just before the opening of the library; the second coming off in the summer of 1860, and netting for its purpose one hundred sixty-two dollars. The city council's first appropriation in favor of the library, after its establishment, came in 1858, and was only fifty dollars. The next year an allowance of two hundred dollars was made, which was annually continued until 1863; when, notwithstanding the burdens of war, the appropriation was raised to three hundred

dollars. At the end of the fiscal year, 1865, the trustees reminded the city council that the sum of three hundred dollars had not been for two years past, and, probably, would not be for some years to come, adequate to supply the necessary books. This was an enforcement of their report for 1864, in which they had set out the somewhat remarkable fact, that notwithstanding the excitement occasioned by the great national struggle which had been going on during the year, the library had attracted more readers than in any previous year of its existence. Though the first eight city appropriations in favor of the library after its opening hardly counted fifteen hundred dollars, yet, by wise expenditure, they increased the number of circulating volumes from fourteen hundred to nearly four thousand, for the use of the goodly number of readers represented by seven hundred patrons. Subsequent pages will note, in due time and order, the continued and more rapid progress of the institution.

Since the public library was to be an institution tending to perfect "and render available the elementary knowledge acquired"<sup>1</sup> in the public school, the movement to establish the former was fitly coincident with another eminently suited to advance the interests of the latter. In 1846 a fruitless attempt had been made to unite the ninth, tenth, and eleventh districts. But now, in 1855, nine years later, the consummation long wished for by the progressive friends of education came; and, under an ordinance passed the year before, and by the major vote of each district, the three became the Union School District. Soon the Somersworth act was adopted, and committees, prudential and superintending, were elected. The latter consisted of Artemas B. Muzzey, Henry E. Parker, Amos Hadley, Asa Fowler, and Paltiah Brown. Four years later the state legislature authorized the district to choose a board of education, consisting of nine members—the terms of three of whom should expire each year—to take the place of the committees. The first nine were elected on the 10th of September, 1859. They were Henry E. Parker, David Patten, Josiah P. Nutting, Caleb Parker, Jesse P. Bancroft, Paltiah Brown, Parsons B. Cogswell, Asa Fowler, and Joseph B. Walker. The board of education, as well as the whole system of which it was an essential part, was the result of healthy evolution, and could not but be permanent.<sup>2</sup>

Charity in those days inspired much noteworthy educational effort. Mayor Low, in 1854, commended to the attention of the city council the schools established by benevolent ladies for the mental and indus-

<sup>1</sup> Report of committee in 1852.

<sup>2</sup> See more detailed treatment in special Educational chapter.

trial education of neglected and friendless children, and invited thereto not pecuniary aid but individual and corporate influence in promoting the success of an enterprise so important and valuable. The schools thus referred to were conducted under the auspices of the two leading charitable organizations of the city. The sewing school of the Concord Female Benevolent Association connected with the Unitarian church had been in successful operation for seventeen years, when, in 1853, the Rumford Charity School was instituted by the Concord Female Charitable Society—a movement especially prompted by the reception of a legacy from the Countess of Rumford. The former school had been from its beginning in the faithful, self-sacrificing charge of Mrs. Capen, wife of the first city librarian, and had steadily grown in favor, till its attendance increased from eight pupils to seventy. This form of humane effort was, therefore, no doubtful experiment when the second school was established. There was no new plan to be devised and carried out; two, with a common purpose, were to till a broadening field of charitable endeavor where one had tilled before. That purpose was to bring together within the reach of salutary influences, on the afternoons of Saturday, from May to October of each year, destitute young girls, to be trained in needle work, and in making up, from materials usually supplied by the societies, garments and other articles for their own use; to impart to them wholesome moral, unsectarian instruction; and to foster in them self-respect, promptness in duty, neatness, love of order, and good manners. Those school seasons bore promises of precious fruitage in the life of many a pupil. Of the fulfilment of those promises, the closing sessions of the school terms gave constant assurance; while they were of themselves frequently occasions of much attractive interest. Especially so were those of 1864, when the sixty children of one school at the close of its eighteenth season, and the seventy of the other at the close of its second, appeared in neat uniform attire, made by themselves from material furnished by Mayor Low, whose presence they welcomed with a hearty and graceful expression of thanks. “Who knows,” wrote a visitant on one of these occasions, “what a shield against temptation will hereafter be the happy remembrance of that day to many a young heart—what an incentive to earnest well-doing in life.”<sup>1</sup>

The Lyceum, in its lecture courses, continued to co-operate with other educational forces in promoting the intellectual growth and literary culture of the community. Of the choicest talent of the land, then utilized in this form of popular instruction, there appeared upon the platforms of the Merrimack and the Penacook lyceums not

<sup>1</sup> *State Capital Reporter*, Oct. 6, 1854.

a little of the best; for Horace Greeley, Bayard Taylor, Benjamin P. Shillaber, John G. Saxe, Herman Melville, John Pierpont, George Sumner, Wendell Phillips, John B. Gough, George William Curtis, and Henry Ward Beecher sometimes stood there before Concord audiences to delight and edify. Nor did Parker Pillsbury, the sturdy, eloquent "Anti-Slavery Apostle," fail to do honor there to home talent in his treatment of miscellaneous themes.

Here instances of literary activity, manifesting itself in literary production exclusive of journalism, demand a place in the regular course of narration. Thus, some of the genius-born thoughts of Nathaniel P. Rogers had been transferred from the columns of a Concord newspaper to the pages of a book that was in its second edition in 1849. During the early fifties, the second superintendent of the New Hampshire Asylum for the Insane, Dr. Andrew McFarland, a son of Concord's third minister, produced a pleasing volume entitled "The Escape," embodying observations made upon a short vacation trip to Europe; and his brother, Asa McFarland, who accompanied him, produced another entitled "Five Months Abroad." In 1856 was published "The History of Concord from the First Grant in 1725 to the Organization of the City Government in 1853," the conscientious work of the honored pastor of the North church. The author has told the story of its preparation in the following words of autobiographic recollection:<sup>1</sup>

"I resolved at the outset that the work should not interrupt or interfere with my weekly labors for the pulpit, nor with my ordinary parochial duties. It did not perceptibly. I gathered facts as I went round among the people, and placed them on file. At stated times, I examined the old Town records, and took notes. I kept an eye on all the passing events of the town. . . . When the time arrived to put the abundant materials of twenty years' collecting into a history; when I resolved to take up my pen and write a volume, that should not interfere with my work—'hic labor, hoc opus.' That was a toil to which, I confess, human endurance was hardly equal. I favored myself somewhat by writing out only one sermon a week; preaching extemporaneously, and now and then 'turning over the barrel,' as the phrase is—that is, using an old sermon with new trimmings. My history went on till, after three years, the work came to its termination. It was a little too much; towards the close, I found myself becoming nervous and uneasy. After writing an hour or so, my hand would tremble; I thought the pen was tired of my fingers, and would n't make a good mark. Then I would lay it down, and walk awhile across the room, or run out into the open air.

<sup>1</sup> Autobiography of Rev. Nathaniel Bouton, D. D., 39-40.

But thanks to the good Providence that watched over me, I finished the composition of the history, in about three years, and wrote the whole with one gold pen—nor was I hindered in this, or any part of my work, by a single day's sickness."

The town, at its last meeting in March, 1853, gave aid to the proposed History by appropriating three hundred dollars, to be expended by a committee consisting of Nathaniel B. Baker, Jonathan Eastman, and Joseph B. Walker, in procuring the publication of portions of the original Proprietors' and Town Records, either in connection with the History, or otherwise. As the work neared completion, the city council, on the 24th of February, by ordinance, authorized Joseph B. Walker to expend one hundred fifty dollars in providing engraved maps for the History of Concord. Thus, under both the town and the city government, the important literary undertaking received a substantial test of appreciation in a direct draft upon the treasury.

In the autumn of 1852, a movement was made, looking especially to "the improvement of the moral, mental, and social condition of young men." It was estimated that there were, at that time, in town, twenty-four hundred males, between fourteen and forty years of age, and fourteen hundred, between fourteen and twenty-five; and that, in the main village, there were fifteen hundred of the first class and eight hundred of the second.

On the evening of October 25, fifty young men, representing the churches of the different "evangelical" denominations in town, met in the vestry of the South church to consider the subject of forming a Young Men's Christian Association, similar in its plan and object to one already in existence in Boston. Of this meeting, Lyman D. Stevens was chairman, and Isaac N. Elwell, secretary. The wisdom of trying the proposed experiment was discussed. There were serious doubts in some minds "whether it was wise to organize such a society in a place so small as Concord then was."<sup>1</sup> The Reverend Augustus Woodbury, pastor of the Unitarian church, came to the meeting, and ineffectually "urged the organization of the society on such a basis as to include the young men of his congregation."<sup>1</sup> Finally, a committee was appointed to report a constitution and by-laws.

The committee made a report on the 8th of November, which was adopted. At once, a permanent organization of the Concord Young Men's Christian Association was effected by the choice of George B. Chandler as president; Abraham J. Prescott and John D. Teel as vice-presidents; Rufus Lane as corresponding secretary; Isaac N.

<sup>1</sup> Letter of Prof. J. H. Gilmore, University of Rochester, N. Y., Oct. 20, 1895.



Elwell, as recording secretary; Henry A. Newhall, as treasurer; and H. F. E. Nichols, as librarian. A board of ten managers was also selected, consisting of two members of each of the following churches: Baptist, North Congregational, South Congregational, Episcopal, and Methodist. Two classes of members were constituted: active, comprising members of evangelical churches; and associate, made up of young men of good moral character. The annual membership fee was one dollar.

Early in the winter, 1852-'53, a reading-room was secured in the new Exchange building, with the hope—as expressed by the corresponding secretary, in an address to the public through the newspapers—"that, in a warm room, well-lighted with gas, and in companionship with good associates, books, and periodicals, the young man" might "spend his leisure evening hours away from temptation, and in the cultivation of mind and heart." A library was contemplated; and one was actually begun, in a small way, with books presented by members. A course of lectures, or addresses, was projected, and partially, at least, carried out. The opening address was delivered on Sunday evening, January 18, 1853, by the Reverend Charles W. Flanders, pastor of the Baptist church. It was published in pamphlet, and somewhat widely circulated. It put at about one hundred the membership of the Association at that time; and characterized the organization as "a Christian Union, combining the force of lecture, reading-room, and social meeting, thereby aiming to promote right principles, virtuous habits, useful lives, and so far as God will aid us, to secure to young men a trusting and peaceful close of life."

But the well-intentioned undertaking was short-lived. Its limited financial means precluded efforts and outlays necessary to arouse and sustain public interest. Its reading-room, upon which high hopes had been set, had no secretary or librarian, regularly in charge, to welcome visitors, and at an early date—as recalled by one member at least—"was fearfully unattractive, and generally empty, as it deserved to be."<sup>1</sup> Besides, the "evangelical" exclusiveness of the Association naturally created a sectarian prejudice against its operations that tended to hinder success. Be the causes what they might, the Association became temporarily extinct. The more successful movement of similar intent and under the same name, made fifteen years later, is a topic reserved for treatment in its proper time.

As a promoter of fraternity and beneficence Freemasonry had, for nearly sixty years, been represented in Concord by Blazing Star Lodge, when the Masonic quarters long located in the Concord Bank

<sup>1</sup> Letter of Prof. J. H. Gilmore.

building, but now outgrown, were exchanged for others more attractive and commodious. In January, 1858, the Lodge accepted a proposition made by Robert N. Corning, to erect a building on the corner of Main and Pleasant streets, and to furnish apartments therein for Masonic purposes. The corner-stone of the proposed structure was laid on Monday, the fifth day of July following, with a programme of happily combined exercises appropriate both to the special occasion and to the celebration of the national holiday. The procession was a prominent feature. Under the chief marshalship of Edward H. Rollins, the Trinity Commandery of Knights Templar of Manchester, and Masonic bodies from other parts of the state, escorted the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of New Hampshire from the old Masonic hall to the front of the state house. The procession, having there been joined by members of the city government and of the fire



Main Street, looking North from Pleasant Street, with Masonic Temple at Left—1900.

department, by a cavalcade of truckmen, and by numerous other citizens in carriages or on foot, moved, to the music of the band, up Main to Penacook street, thence down State to West, and then up Main to Pleasant, where the ceremony of laying the corner-stone was performed by the officers of the Grand Lodge. The procession reformed, then moved to the state house park, where Fourth of July exercises were held; Brother Mason W. Tappan, of Bradford, reading the Declaration of Independence, and Brother William L. Foster, of Concord, delivering the oration.

This event the historian of Blazing Star Lodge has characterized as "a beginning of importance to the Masonic fraternity of Concord." The new apartments were dedicated on the 19th of January, 1859, by the grand officers of the state. The Blazing Star Lodge took a twenty years' lease, during the continuance of which the other Masonic bodies were tenants of the lessee.

In 1859 Mount Horeb Commandery of Knights Templar was in-

stituted in Concord; its first officers being installed on the 21st of November of that year. Of these, Edward H. Rollins was Commander; Reuben G. Wyman, Generalissimo; and Lyman A. Walker, Captain-General. The organization was the revival of an old Encampment—the former name of Commandery—originally located in Hopkinton, and for some time dormant. Under more favorable conditions in its new location, it became a flourishing representative of Templar Masonry.

Earlier, about the year 1847, the Trinity Royal Arch Chapter of Free and Accepted Masons had also been transferred from Hopkinton to a permanent home in Concord. Later, on the 13th of June, 1860, the Grand Lodge of New Hampshire granted warrant to John Dame, George H. Emery, Thomas L. Tullock, Allen Tenny, Charles C. Clement, Abel Hutchins, James B. Gove, Edward Dow, and Luther W. Nichols, Jr., for establishing Eureka Lodge, No. 70. Accordingly, a new Lodge was forthwith instituted, that was to become no unimportant factor of Masonic progress; as was also to become another organization, the Horace Chase Council of Royal and Select Masters, established in 1862.

Nor should it be forgotten in this connection that, while Freemasonry was thus strengthening itself, Odd Fellowship was becoming stronger; and that its White Mountain Lodge was flourishing. Though Harmony hall, which had been the pleasant home of the Lodge for fourteen years, was destroyed by fire on the 10th of September, 1859, yet, on the 25th of October, 1860, a new home, more pleasant than the old, and occupying the same site, at the corner of Main and Warren streets, was formally dedicated to the uses of Odd Fellowship. There the good work of the Order was to be done for thirty years.

The progress of temperance reform has already been a theme of narration. It will be recalled that the town had, as early as 1852, instructed its representatives in the general court to support the enactment of a prohibitory statute similar to the one then in force in Maine, and had requested its selectmen to license but two persons to sell wines or spirituous liquors—and to do that only for medicinal, mechanical, and chemical purposes. But it was not until two years after the formation of the city government that the principle of prohibition supplanted that of license in temperance legislation. However, means of restraining the sale and use of intoxicants in the city were found in the efforts of the long-established Concord Temperance Society, and of the recent "Order of the Sons of Temperance;" in the enforcement of the state law; in the regulation of restaurants by ordinance; and in the efficient performance of duty by the police de-

partment, including its court. Hence Mayor Low, at the opening of his second year of service, could announce the "suppression, in some good degree, of the sale of intoxicating drinks;" and Mayor Clement could, a year later, declare to the city council: "The sale of intoxicating drinks has been stopped, in a great degree, by our predecessors. A wholesome temperance sentiment pervades this community, and any well-directed endeavors on our part to seal up the fountains of so much immorality and misery as dram-shops always are, will, without doubt, meet the hearty approval of a vast majority of our citizens."

On the 13th of August, 1855, the Prohibitory Law, entitled "An act for the suppression of intemperance," went into effect. This event had been anticipated by the city council of Concord, on the 28th of July, in the passage of the following explicit resolutions:—"Resolved—That the late act for the suppression of intemperance in this State meets with our entire approbation:" "Therefore, resolved—that the city marshal and his assistants are requested to prosecute, with promptness and energy, all violations and infringements of said law."

The day after the law went into operation the mayor and aldermen proceeded to put Concord in position to meet the new requirements, by providing for the appointment of liquor agents—one for the main village and one for Fisherville; the annual salary of the former to be three hundred dollars, and that of the latter, one hundred and fifty. Also, authority was given the mayor to borrow one thousand dollars to be appropriated to the purchase of liquors for the agencies. Charles A. Farnam was the first agent in the city proper, and held the office for six months, when he was succeeded by B. L. Johnston. In all this was manifested the purpose to obey the new law, and by honest and judicious enforcement to test its virtue as a reformatory agent.

Three years before the town became the city, the thought of employing Gas for lighting purposes in the main village was entertained. Accordingly, in 1850, an act "to incorporate the Concord Gas-Light Company" was obtained. The capital stock was not to exceed one hundred thousand dollars, and the grantees named were Joseph Low, A. C. Prince [Pierce], John Gibson, Nathaniel G. Upham, George O. Odlin, Perkins Gale, Benjamin Grover, George Hutchins, John Gass, and Cyrus Hill. But not until the 3d of August, 1852, was held the first meeting of the grantees, upon the call of Joseph Low and John Gibson, as provided in the charter. Then associates were chosen and by-laws were adopted. The capital stock was fixed at thirty-five thousand dollars, divided into seven

hundred shares. Seven directors were elected, with power to choose a president, a clerk, and a treasurer. The directors were George B. Chandler, Nathaniel B. Baker, Nathaniel White, Edward H. Rollins, Micajah C. Burleigh, Rufus Clement, and Benjamin Grover. These met on the same day after the adjournment of the grantees' meeting, and chose George B. Chandler, president, Nathaniel B. Baker, clerk, and Rufus Clement, treasurer. A committee, consisting of Nathaniel White, Edward H. Rollins, and Nathaniel B. Baker, was selected "to solicit subscriptions to stock, and for lights."

Operations were at once commenced; and at meetings of the directors, held on the 3d and 11th of December, 1852, the treasurer was directed to take a bond of the land belonging to the Concord Railroad Corporation upon which—in the language of the vote—"the gas works are in the process of erection." The stockholders were assessed fifty per cent. of each share. The treasurer was given full power to purchase coal, lime, whiskey, and all other articles necessary to the manufacture of gas, and was also directed to pay the Somersworth Machine Company the sum of twelve thousand dollars on a contract entered into August 25, 1852.<sup>1</sup> At the meeting of December 11th it was voted that the company furnish the supply pipe and lay the same for sixteen feet from the main pipe, or to the person's land who uses the gas. By February 9, 1853, such progress had been made that the directors voted full powers to Messrs. Clement, Rollins, and Burleigh to make arrangements for the furnishing of fixtures to the consumers of gas, with instructions to "attend to the duty forthwith." It was also voted that the company furnish gas to consumers at the rate of three dollars and seventy-five cents per thousand feet;<sup>2</sup> and that the treasurer be directed "to procure a deed of the lot on which the buildings of the company are erected, and pay for the same." By summer, gas-light began to be regularly supplied. The town, however, did not at its last meeting in March, 1853, become a customer, but dismissed the article in the warrant as to the erection of ten or more gas-lights on Main and State streets; properly enough leaving the matter to the city, which was soon to be. The enterprise was prosecuted with success, and in December, 1853, a dividend at the rate of six per cent. per annum was declared. Indeed, during the first year of the city the new mode of illumination grew so fast in public favor that the company the next year increased, with the consent of the state legislature, its capital stock to fifty thousand dollars, divided into one thousand shares, and it also took measures to enlarge its plant.

Of course the gas-light system was confined in its operations and

<sup>1</sup> MSS. Records of Gas Company, Vol. I, pp. 10-11.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 12-13